

[Picture. Anthericum drepanophyllum (Buk.) Schtr. 1/2 natural size. 137
Pelargonium zonale Willd. 5/6 natural size.] 222

The leaves and flowers of the /ũ/robis, of the Oxalis genus are 262
dried in a pan over the fire, crumbled and kneaded in fresh milk when
cooled. The milk then curdles. All the coarse fibrous parts are re- [252]
moved, the leaves and blossoms separate into small pieces and are
eaten.

Several compositae offer edible blossoms. The blossoms of two
Gazania species (one white and one yellow, both called *!go-bo//nã/s)
are eaten with pleasure, either raw or stirred into a porridge in boiling
milk with salt.

A number of compositae are grouped together under the collective
name *!gĩ-gye/ga-mes, to which those with edible blossoms also be-
long [203] such as the Berkheya corymbosa D.C. The above-mentioned
Hottentot term, however, also includes a Hydrophyllaceae with edible [824]
blossoms, Codon Royeni Thbg. and is also used for Compositae which
cannot be eaten such as Eremóthamnus Marlothianus O. Hffm.). It
must also be considered that many of the above-mentioned blossoms
are only occasionally eaten by adults, but one cannot pass them by
without any comment, because they are of importance for the nourish- [855]
ment of the children, who have to get along by themselves and can
satisfy their hunger with them. The same is true of the gum-resin
(hai-rab) of the acacias. [Picture. Codon Royeni Thbg. Natural size.]

3. Luxuries

Luxuries of the natives were formerly infusions made from legumes 222
and herbs of various kinds. Even today the capsules of Ectadium 272
virgatum E. Mey. and the seeds from the pods [204] of the Acacia
hebeclada, D.C. which are as long as a finger and stand stiffly up- 137
right, are roasted, ground and infused while boiling. Similarly they
use the seeds of a pod-bearing bush called !kχã/s, which is easily
recognized by its soft leaves, longer than one's finger and piny
needles, which are set in pairs at the root of a long, yellow, hard,
sharp thorn that is a centimeter long. A fern is also brewed as tea. 177
But since the natives have become accustomed to our coffee and tea, 272
the above-mentioned plants have ceased to be important, at least
in the household of the healthy Hottentot. In addition the Hottentot
has become a slave to alcohol and tobacco since coming into contact
with whites.

[Picture. Farob, a tea fern. 5/4 natural size.]

[272]
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Tobacco is indispensable to Hottentots of both sexes. It is the first thing they reach for after waking up in the morning. They have it in the form of large rolls or in firmly packed flat American packets. Because the smoker first cuts (xao) it, then stuffs (//hā) it in his pipe, they call it xao//hā, unless they prefer the foreign word ta bagab. Wild hemp, da-ab, which the Bechuans are so fond of smoking, is not unknown in Namaland but is more rarely used. The Hottentots are economical smokers. They inhale the smoke deeply, and keep it in as long as they can and let it slowly trail out of their mouth and nose. Particularly economical smokers wipe the tobacco tar into a little leather wallet, fnuni-//ga-rus. If their supply of tobacco is used up, they cut up the leather that is drenched in nicotine and smoke the pieces mixed with chopped straw.

[415]

Alcohol was always known to the Hottentots. When they live way out on the veld and cannot get this stimulant except as their ancestors did, [205] they still brew their honey beer, !kza-rib.

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The wild African honey bees (called !habu-b) in Namaland usually build their honeycombs in caves, more rarely in hollow trees. The Hottentot knows exactly the individual parts of the bees' house. He differentiates exactly the pollen (fnā-o-b) stored up in the comb from the virgin honey (hū-danib). His generic term for honey is dani-b. The waxy bee cells which are joined together into a comb and which float to the surface after being emptied when one makes sugar beer, are called */ha-mi. The honeycomb in which the brood lies is differentiated by the word /ā-b, and *tsēb or tsērab is the word for the material which the bee uses to roof over the honeycomb.

[136]
222

[273]
[825]

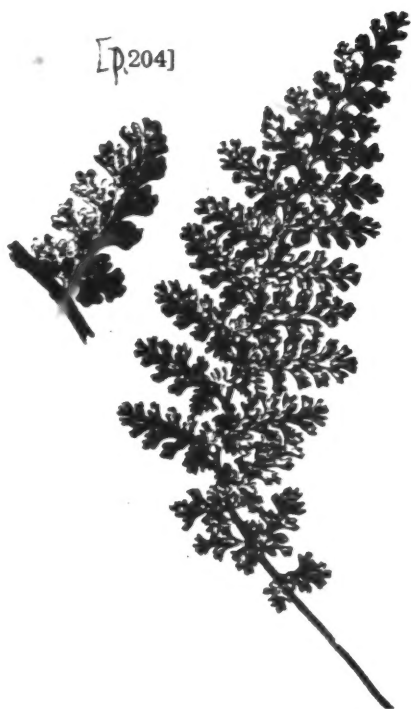
The cave, near which the bees are seen, is first poked with a long stick as thick as one's finger. If honey sticks to the tip of the stick, a firebrand is placed in the entrance to the cave to drive the bees as far away as possible. Then a man creeps into the cave and breaks off the honeycomb with a wooden forked hoe.

If the cave is too small for a man to creep inside and if the only entrance is a slit the width of a hand, then they use a special honey stick, *!a-rub or !a-nib. They cut a long stick about the thickness of the little finger from the branches of the taai bush or even better from the roots of the thorn tree and attach to the front end with strips of leather two lighter little pieces of wood //gaĩnkxa, the length of a finger, that have a sharp point and are faced towards the back. This

222
413

137
222
●272

[p.204]



Farob, a tea fern. 4/5 natural size.

at one sitting. In other cases the calf is permitted to suck for a second time. The milk, which the cow gives then, the "after-milk," /gubib, is, according to the Hottentots, thicker and also much yellower than the first milk which they call ai-daib or "pre-milk." The after-milk is therefore thinned with water. The milk which the cow gives after the calf has sucked for the third time, is called *tsau/gubib, the fourth milk *tsau!gā//gubib. But the cow is rarely milked in this fashion to the last drop. 233

From the usual after-milk the Hottentot distinguishes a milk called *nunidaib, which is obtained when the cow has pastured for several hours after the first milking and then is milked again after the calf has sucked a second time.

The milk, //ha/mi, "biesmilk," that is drawn off immediately after calving is considered harmful to the calf because it curdles into a hard mass in the stomach. The Hottentot values it all the more for himself. He usually drinks it boiled and diluted with regular milk. [272]● The cow's teats must not come into direct contact with this milk and therefore are moistened with saliva. If the udder is inflamed the ailing parts are rubbed with a salve made of fat and powdery spores of a mushroom (*hīrasāyb, i.e. hyena buchu). If the biesmilk is yellow, it is called *!kīā//gyere//ha/mi, after a bush with yellowy green leaves. [824] If it is white it is called *da//ha/mi.

d) The management of the herds of a cattle owner in Great Nama-land, which for the reasons mentioned above extends over a wide area, is simplified by the dryness which makes so much land necessary. Water stays permanently at only a few places well-known to man and beast and both know also where you can find temporary watering places after a good rain. These are the ideal gathering places for the scattered animals. [312]

Only the full-grown cattle have complete freedom to roam since they need neither protection nor guidance. The oxen, go/ma·gu, depending on the time of year, come every 2 to 3 days and sometimes every 4 to 5 days to the watering places and are easily captured while they are drinking when they are needed for work. In emergencies they must be sought in the field. [259] The man who has this job can recognize by the tracks which cross his path in all directions which are surely those of his herd. Further, he can pick out the track of the particular ox he is seeking among them all. Senses which have been

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[761] and to youths who had passed through the puberty rites.¹ This taboo was apparently associated with the myth connecting the hare with the origin of death, which we have already met with among the Bushmen also. Even this restriction, however, seems now to have lapsed. The older writers on the Cape Hottentots mention several other food restrictions in addition to that on the hare. Thus, according to Graevenbroeck, wild pigs, hyenas, lions, and other carnivorous animals were regarded as impure and not fit to be eaten. It was also "deemed unlawful" to taste butter and eggs, while only children were permitted to nourish themselves upon sheep's milk, which was looked upon as dangerous to adults.² Kolb, again, states that pig's flesh and fish without scales were forbidden by custom to both sexes; that the men only might not eat the hare or the rock rabbit, or drink the milk of sheep, while the women, on the other hand, were forbidden the "pure blood of beasts" and the flesh of the mole.³ Thunberg, again, says that the men never drank milk that had been drawn by women⁴—a statement which may be compared with Albrecht's report that many orthodox Naman believe their cows will give no milk if the women were to drink cows' milk, since this is "good only for the men", hence the women must content themselves with the milk of the sheep and goats.⁵ It is questionable how far these statements can be accepted as entirely accurate, but they seem at least to suggest that there must have been some special regulations regarding the drinking of milk. Unfortunately there is no other information at all to throw further light upon this important point. Finally, even at the present time, according to Vedder, "a real Nama never eats the flesh of a wild dog, a monkey, a hyena, jackal, a lion or a hare. He believes the meat of these animals to be impure and injurious to health. But this custom is also slowly disappearing."⁶

276 As narcotics the Hottentots formerly used infusions of various
824 legumes and herbs. Even to-day the capsules of *Ecladium virgatum*
272 *E. Mey.* and the seeds of *Acacia hebeclada* D.C. are still roasted, ground down, and brewed with water. But increasing familiarity with the tea and especially the coffee introduced by the Europeans

¹ Cf. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*, 328-9; Wikar, "Berigt aan ... Plettenberg," 118-19; Olpp, "Aus den Sagenschatz der Khoi-Khoi," 46-7.

² "Uit den Ouden Tijd," 364.

³ Op. cit., 96-7.

⁴ *Travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia*, ii, 42.

⁵ "Beobachtungen im Gross-Namalande," 205.

⁶ "The Nama," 129.

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has caused the old native brews to fall into general disuse, except perhaps in case of illness. The Naman also sometimes still make a kind of mead out of wild honey. The honey is diluted with water, and then brewed with the help of various roots or fleshy stems, e.g. *Pachypodium namaquensis*, so as to produce fermentation. European alcoholic liquors, however, find far too ready a market amongst them now, and excessive drinking is by no means unusual, especially among the detribalized people. 272

Tobacco, which they did not cultivate themselves, the Hottentots soon learned to appreciate when it was introduced amongst them by the Bantu and by Europeans. It has now come to be almost indispensable to them. Practically all men and women, and even the children, make use of it. Occasionally it is chewed, but far more generally it is smoked. The men often make their own pipes out of serpentine, which they cut with a knife into hollow tubes shaped somewhat like a cigar; or else they use the marrow bone of a medium-sized mammal. The mouth edge of the pipe is thickly stuffed with grass, so as to prevent the ashes of the tobacco from being swallowed; and in company the pipe is passed round from person to person, each taking several deep inhalations to the fullest capacity of his lungs before passing it on to his neighbour. Dagga¹ was formerly also used to a considerable extent, and indeed, according to Kolb, the smoking of dagga was a frequent, even an essential, accompaniment to some of the ceremonies. Nowadays it is much less easy to obtain, for owing to its definitely injurious effects when taken in excessive quantities its cultivation and sale have been restricted by the Government. The Cape Hottentots used to smoke it in horn water-pipes similar to those of the Cape Bushmen.¹ 276

SEXUAL LIFE AND MARRIAGE

Extra-Marital Sexual Relations

The sexual life of the Hottentots is no longer so strictly regulated as it seems to have been in the old days. There is now apparently great freedom of intercourse tolerated before and also practised after marriage. Formerly premarital unchastity was severely condemned among the Naman, and even penalized. A girl who had gone wrong was thrashed by her parents, or with their consent, in the presence of her lover, who then received a similar punishment. These beatings were administered under the direction of the head 836

¹ Kolb, op. cit., 104-5; Albrecht, loc. cit.; Schultze, op. cit., 204, 248.

² [Either Indian hemp, or one of two relatively non-toxic herbs, *Leonotis leonurus* or *L. orata*. - Analyst] 837

kitchen, and herein they are very different from the Bushmen²⁶² and Bergdama; a real Nama never eats the flesh of a wild dog, a monkey, a hyæna, jackal, a lion or a hare. He believes the meat of these animals to be impure and injurious to health. But this custom is also slowly disappearing.

9. The Nama from the earliest times has appreciated honey-²⁷³ beer, which he knew how to brew from wild honey by a²⁷⁶ process of fermentation, and he indulged in smoking "dacha." This "dacha" is a kind of hemp, with a narcotic smoke, which puts the smoker in a state of dreamy insensibility after the first few draughts.

Recently they have taken to drinking instead of this honey-²⁷³ beer, a kind of sugar-beer brewed in great quantities from sugar, yeast, legumes and water. A Nama who drinks his sugar-beer regularly becomes the most miserable and unemployable of individuals.

It is a great blessing for the tribe that the acquisition of strong and spirituous drinks is prohibited. The German Government had prohibited the sale of liquor to them and the Mandate Administration has maintained this prohibition. Even if brandy is prohibited, they still have tobacco, coffee²⁷⁶ and sugar at their disposal, and these three are so essential²⁷² to the life of a Nama that it has been said exaggeratingly²⁶² that the Nama having these three means of enjoyment, will be able to live on them without longing for anything else.

V. RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS CULTS.

1. For more than 200 years the majority of Hottentots⁷⁹⁷ have more or less been under Christian influence and there-⁷⁷⁶fore it will be very difficult to give any reliable account of their real and traditional religion, as only inadequate reports about their religious ideas and customs of the time when they first came in contact with Europeans, are obtainable. The Dutch minister Valentyn, who stayed at the Cape for some time on his homeward journey from India, relates, in about the year 1705, that he heard of the Almighty being called by the name Khouron and that they called the Evil one Dango and Damoh. They also told him of a divine being Tiqua or Tuqua and besides they feared a ghost called Somsoma very much. But Peter Kolbe says in 1719 that it is undeniable that the Hottentots pray to a supreme being which they called Gounia Tiqua. In 1671 Dapper tells of the worship of Humma or Summa, and Missionary Schmidt, who was the first missionary to work among the Hottentots from 1735-1744, writes the name of the Supreme Being Tui-Lqua. According to Wuras the Koranna worshipped Cukoab as their heavenly God, whose name appears in seven different spellings in his small "Bible." It must be remembered that all these reports are from people who were not acquainted with the Hottentot language, and their attempts to reproduce the

841 ways, which it is not necessary to mention here. When she
 823 is ready to come out, a matron, who has been a successful
 married woman, with many children whom she has reared, but
 who is now past the child-bearing age, and who has taken charge
 of the girl all through her seclusion at the invitation of the
 mother, enters her hut, cleanses the girl of all her Axa /urip,
 her child dirt. This is very thoroughly done, as I have myself
 seen, with melted butter and wet cow-dung, every inch of the
 girl's body being well scoured. The girl is then given a complete
 set of new clothing, and is led into the outer hut by the matron
 with whom she prepares a meal for the other women assembled
 to receive her. Nowadays, it is tea or coffee she prepares.
 [272] formerly it was meat slaughtered for the occasion. The matron
 177] must hold her hand as she takes the pot, and aid her with each
 thing she does. Soot from the pot is put on her forehead, and
 together the old woman and she eat a piece of meat prepared apart
 from the rest. So she is made free to cook and prepare a meal
 once more. Similarly, she must be reintroduced to all her daily
 tasks by the old woman. They milk together, gather wood
 together, collect roots and berries. Towards evening, when the
 usual time comes for getting the household supply of water, she
 goes accompanied by all the old women, the matron in charge
 of her walking just in front of her, another old woman behind,
 as they move along in single file. Arrived at the water, the
 matron takes wet mud from the water, rubs it on the girl's legs,
 and then she takes a branch and splashes the water over the
 girl. Finally, both of them take hold of the branch and strike
 the water. The matron then fills the girl's bucket and her own,
 puts one on the girl's head, and then the procession returns home.
 After this the girl is perfectly free to use water whenever she
 likes, except when she has her period. Nothing is said, so far as
 I know, when the girl is reintroduced to water, but when a
 widow is similarly splashed all over the old woman says: "Gara
 823 dama goure !haba !habare" (Don't get thin, get fat, fat as
 [844] the !haba tuber). In the case of a woman with a baby, it will
 [755] be the older women who have looked after her who will free
 her from all her restrictions. In the case of a person with some
 disease, it will be the inoculator who will do it, but always the
 procedure is the same, so far as the water is concerned. When
 823 I was in Windhoek, this last Christmas, a woman died on a
 841 neighbouring farm, but was brought in to be buried by her
 friends in the location. What the real cause of death was I
 do not know for certain: it may have been heart failure, as it
 was very sudden. The natives' account is quite definite. The
 woman had her period, yet started to do her mistress's washing
 in cold water. She just died on the spot! Several other instances
 I got in Franzfontein from women who had been working for

* !Haba is *Fockea damarana*, Schltr., an Asclepiad with a large tuber. 95 per cent of the weight is made up by a thin milky juice. The tuber is eaten raw. !Haba !Haba is a verb formed by reduplication from this noun.

8: Dapper Q-4 (no date) 1933

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raw, and seldom cooked, with entrails and guts as well, first
however, pressing out the excrement backwards or squeezing
it out with the teeth. 262
252

When they find no dead animals, they look along the
shore for dead fish, and for limpets, periwinkles and oysters. [222]
They also delight in the flesh of sea-dogs or seals, which 262
they kill at night with sticks when these beasts come by [225]
thousands to the beach and bleat like calves. The meat
they consume raw, or roasted in the fire half done and
unwashed. They are likewise no strangers to the blubber
of whales and other sea monsters which are now and then
washed up on shore. It has happened that they scooped
out by handfuls, and gulped down like that, the sun-dried
blubber of a whale stranded in the Salt River, also cutting [251]
out pieces which they buried under the sand to eat later⁷²).
At times they tear pieces with their teeth out of their hard
sheepskin or sealskin cloaks, and eat these only slightly
roasted on coals. The Beachrangers, or Hottentots living
along the shore at the Cape, come to the ships of the Dutch,
and betake themselves at once to the kitchen, where, if they
can, they remove whole handfuls of the fat floating on top
of the meat kettle, and toss it into their mouths without
bread. They are very fond of our bread, for which they [431]
willingly exchange cattle. The Saldanhars or Kochoquas
and other neighbouring Hottentots live in the dry summer
time on their cattle, but in the winter on certain roots [222]
growing in the ground during the rainy season. The honey [237]
which collects on the bushes they eat with wax and all. [758]
Their sick people they usually feed on cabbage, mallow and
mustard leaves, cooked with a little stamped blubber.

They drink water or the milk of their cattle, but also
hanker very greedily after brandy and Spanish wine, as
well as tobacco; although they become sated and drunk
from only a little, when they create a tremendous tumult of
shouting and babbling. 272
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276

INDUSTRY.

They trouble themselves with hardly any handicrafts or
industries, other than preparing rushes from which to make
mats for covering their huts, and herding their cattle and
sheep. By watching our countrymen, however, they have
learned to forge for themselves the points of their darts
and assegais from bits of old iron, which they find thrown
away by us here and there.⁷³) They use nothing more than
one stone as an anvil, and another as a hammer, and make
the iron malleable with charcoal. 285
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⁷²) The incident is referred to in van Riebeeck's Dagverhaal,
March 1-4, 1654.

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CHAP. XVI.

Means of Livelihood.

Nature has taught them gluttony, their slothful indigence teaches them temperance. They have no variety of food; from marshes and mounds they root up sword-lilies; with the leaves of this plant they roof their huts, the bulbs they use for bread. These are dug up by the women, for it is the women who provide food for the men; the men look after the huts and the herds, or else are occupied in war. The only interruption to this diet is in the event of a marriage or a birth, when they slaughter an ox, or at least a sheep, to provide a feast for their friends, unless some wild animal should happen to be taken. They also eat the leaves of many kinds of sedum.²⁷⁾ They drink the milk of cows and sheep. The women do the milking at fixed times of dawn and dusk, and they make it into butter by an elegant process. They skin a bird, and turn the skin inside out so that the feathers are inside; they tie this to a hollow stick and shake it so that the milk is separated into butter and whey.²⁸⁾ With the butter they smear their heads; the whey they drink. They do not know how to make cheese, nor do they like it. They drink nothing except milk and water; they eat only fish with scales, not eels, nor rays, etc., nor any sort of shellfish or oysters.²⁹⁾ But there is a sort of very sweet bream with scales in which they take great delight.

²⁷⁾ Still commonly known in S. Africa as *Hofnotsvyg* (Hottentots fig) or sour fig (= *Mesembrianthemum edule*).

²⁸⁾ A more accurate description of the butter-making process is given by Oreenbroek (see below, p. 247) and by Schreyer, who says: "Die Milch schütteten sie in einen ledern inwendig rauchen Sack, in welchen unten ein Löchlein, welches sie zubinden, alsdenn nehmen ihr zwey den Milch-Sack, jeder bey einem Ende, schütteten und werfen die Milch so lang in einander, biss Butter wird, als denn lassen sie die Butter-Milch durch das Löchlein abfließen, thun die Butter heraus, welche dann, wie leichtlich zuerachten, voll Haar ist, das einen davon eckelt; Innen aber eckelt nicht, denn sie können alles hinein essen, woran wir einen Eckel und abscheu haben" (*Reise nach dem Kaplande*, reprint 1931, 46). [They shake the milk in a skin bag with the hairy surface turned inward. At the bottom is a small hole, which they bind fast. Two of them then take the milk-sack, each at one end, and shake it about vigorously until the milk turns into butter. Then they allow the whey to flow out through the hole, and take out the butter, which, as can easily be imagined, is full of hair, so that one fights shy of it, but this they do not mind, for they eat many a thing which we avoid.] The modern Hottentots employ a somewhat similar method of making butter, which they eat either fresh or dried with various edible plants (cf. Schapera, *op. cit.*, 237).

²⁹⁾ This certainly does not apply to the "Strandlopers", who ate all kinds of fish (see above, p. 57).

H
825 warning in places beset by lions or other wild beasts. And I myself have seen some that betray the presence of snakes. It was by the help of one of these that I came upon a ten-foot, parti-coloured tree-snake, with a very sharp tail and of beautiful appearance, which was, without doubt, intending to seize the bird, or its young, or their nest. H
151 additional proof of their keen sight is that native watchers on shore most faithfully discover the approach of ships to this harbour long before they are visible to European eyes; so that it might be said that in sharpness of vision they rival that Sicilian, who, if we may believe Strabo, did from the Lilybaean promontory count the vessels of the Carthaginian fleet as they sailed out of their own harbour.

H
142 It is a notable fact that nature has adorned the heads of the Hottentots with the thick wool she has denied to their sheep. The sheep I should describe as *musimones*, or hairy. 231 A leg of the local mutton does not, owing to their hateful gourmandise, tempt the nice palate of our dainty countrymen so powerfully as a shoulder of European lamb.

H
262 They live for the most part on beef, mutton, all sorts of game, and other flesh that suits their taste, well roasted or boiled. 252 They also eat sea fish and river fish, and in this they differ widely from the inhabitants of the inland parts, who refrain from every kind of fish, even shell-fish⁷). They live also on wild fruits and roots, and other unpurchased victuals; and whatever else hunger and the belly that is the dispenser of invention has taught gluttons to devour, this they swallow down into their insatiable maws; nor does that barking dog, their stomach, spare whales or other monstrous fish which the tide casts dead or alive upon the shore. Such are their choice feasts!

H
415 In eating liquids, or liquid food, they use spoons fashioned of ox-horn, and sometimes also sea-shells. Or they dip 321 sponges in honey or milk and suck them.

S
H
262 They reject and refuse the flesh of boars, wolves, lions and other wild and carnivorous animals, as unclean, forbidden, and nourished on filth, nor do they think it right to taste butter and eggs. Boys may eat the flesh of hares, but only until provided with a wife. All refrain from sheep's milk as injurious, saving children who are allowed 272 the use of it.⁸)

⁷) This applies to the AmaXhosa, of whom the survivors of the "Stavenisse" reported that "they eat no fish, nor anything that comes out of the sea." (Godée-Molsbergen, *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika*, iii, 62).

n 8) [see pp 182-81 for footnote. - AAN/yf]

000 Et quamvis variae hic praestantesque salinae lacusque, quorum aquae sua sponte in sal concreverunt, salis tamen usus ignorant. Nostratum autem salgama, eorundemque carnem, aut piscem salictum, reliquosque cibos muriaticos non fastidiunt, quorum lactucam, oleraque tandem avidi edere didicere, quae olim pecori cum graminibus campi, illudentes Europaeorum ingluvi, depascenda censebant, et Boves convivas facerent, herbasque aggererent, invitantibus in prandium aut caenam regerebant, iactantes se inedia sustinere, pauperiemque pati ab infantia didicisse. Certe penitius omnem vitam eorum inspiciens comperi ipsos penuriae tolerantissimos, eamque per omnia extrema Rechabitarum similem ducere.

Potus nobis vicinis aqua et lacte, sed extimae gentes sitim insuper oxygulo, alicâ, zyrho, ceriâ, aut cervisiâ levant, quam Rotterodamenti similem, ducentis et amplius hinc milliaribus in capacissimis fictilibus vasis, primae et secundae notae cum pane autopyro coquere, adhaec pinsere granum nostratibus ignotum, farinâ candidissimâ boni nutrimenti, trifarium, millo aliquanto majus, et ab illo panicoque non multum abludente, norunt mulieres, quibus rei familiaris onus, et educendorum liberorum, agrorumque colendorum cura incumbit.

Si quae uno foetu geminos enixa, eos tollunt, et puerperae fovendos, nutriendosque dant: multum discrepantes à ceterioribus, et qui nostratibus intermixti degunt, sueti alterum gemellorum, puellam scilicet, matrem semper servantes, immani saevitia! avibus ferisque diripiendam dilacerandamque in dumo exponere, aut vivam in terram

S
H
262
272
*) None of these food taboos seems to have persisted down to recent times, save only that of the hare. In all the Hottentot tribes this might only be eaten by women and children, and was strictly forbidden to men and to youths who had passed through the puberty rites. This taboo was apparently associated with the well-known myth in which the hare distorts the message given him by the Moon to convey to people on earth, and promises them death instead of immortality. Any man found guilty of eating the hare's flesh was excluded from the company of other men until he had been purified of his offence. (See Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples*, 239-40, 283, 357-8). The "Siavenisse" crew reported of the AmaXhosa that "the old men and women do not eat hares, but the young people may . . . they also do not eat lions and 'wolves' (hyenas), which are held to be unclean." (Godée-Molsbergen, *loc. cit.*) And again: "They do not eat poultry because these feed on filth, still less do they eat eggs, and it makes them sick to see

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
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 Cape Hottentot
 South Nguni FA17

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HOTTENTOTS

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the use of it.⁹) And although there are here various excellent salt beds and pools, whose waters turn of their own accord to salt, yet they are ignorant of the use of it. But they do not refuse our pickles, or pickled foods, or salted flesh or fish. Our lettuces also and other vegetables they have at length learned to eat greedily, though at first, mocking the indiscriminate taste of Europeans, they would say that they were only fit to be eaten by cattle along with the grass of the field. Then, if asked to lunch or dinner, they would retort, make the oxen your guests, pile up the grass, boasting that they could endure fasting and had learned to bear poverty from childhood. And indeed on a close view of their whole life I have come to know that they are very patient of scant living and order their whole existence in the rigorous manner of the Rechabites.

Our neighbours drink water and milk, but the distant tribes quench their thirst also with curds and various sorts of beer. This, which is like Rotterdam beer, is made by the women two hundred and more miles from here in huge earthenware vessels, and is of two qualities.⁹) The women also bake a coarse bread, and pound a grain unknown to our countrymen which produces a white flour and is very nutritive; it is of three sorts, and is somewhat bigger than millet, and not very different from it and panic-grass.¹⁰) On the women lies the burden of the household, and also the education of the children and cultivation of the fields.

If a woman among them bear twins, they rear them, giving them to the mother to be cherished and fed. In this they differ greatly from the nearer tribes and those who live among us, for their custom is, when twins are born, to take one of them, of course the girl, for they always preserve the male, and cast it with hideous cruelty to the birds and beasts to tear and rend in some thicket, or to bury it alive in the earth. The reason they allege is that

Europeans do so" (Moodie, Record, 417). Grevenbroek evidently had these statements in mind when writing the passage above. Schreyer (op. cit., 45) says that Hottentot men were forbidden to drink sheep's milk, which was a food fit only for women.

⁹) Soga (The Ama-Xosa, 399-401) also speaks of two varieties of Kafir beer, *utywala*, a mild inebriant, mostly used at social gatherings, and *amarewa*, a non-intoxicant kind, used for private and domestic drinking. The "Stavenisse" crew said the Amakhosa had corn from which "they make very well tasted and nourishing bread, and brew beer both small and strong, which is not unpleasant in taste, and which they keep in earthen vessels" (Moodie, op. cit., 418).

¹⁰) Kafir corn (*Holcus sorghum*). The "Stavenisse" crew reported the existence of three kinds of this corn (Godée-Molsbergen, op. cit., 67).

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